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"Gentlemen— The King!"

BY JOHN OXENHAM



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A Pilgrim Press Publication



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"GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"
A BOOK OF INTRODUCTION
BY JOHN OXENHAM
ILLUSTRATED BY
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*From
Eleanor Petty
to
Roy & Laura Lynn Tucker*

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TO
THE MEMORY
OF YOU WHO HAVE PASSED
AND
THE CHEER AND HELP
OF THOSE STILL ON THE ROAD
THIS LITTLE BOOK.

Foreword

Every nobly lived life is an imperishable asset to humanity.

The study of such a life is mental dynamic and spiritual tonic, and never were these more needed than they are to-day.

No one can read the lives of such men as Gordon, Livingstone, Paton, Grenfell, without feeling the inspiration of them and a desire for personal enlargement and betterment; and such desire makes for the good of the world.

In this little book I have endeavoured to crystallise the story of the most wonderful and heroic personage of all time, and as clearly and simply as possible to show the meaning of the greatest life ever lived on earth. The quiet heroism and simple beauty of it all, the apparently tragic failure and final triumph, render it unique. It is unrivalled, pivotal, epochal.

Fuller knowledge of that life can hardly fail to bring about closer acquaintance, which may ripen into friendship, with him who lived it. A full acceptance of his teaching would revolutionise the world and make it a clean, sweet place to live in. Every difficulty, national and international, would disappear. Life would be saved from the menace of horrors beyond human imagining. And man, freed from the yoke, would thenceforward march onward and upward, calm-eyed, placid of brow, and strong of heart, walking upright as God intended him to do, in full assurance of the greater things in front.

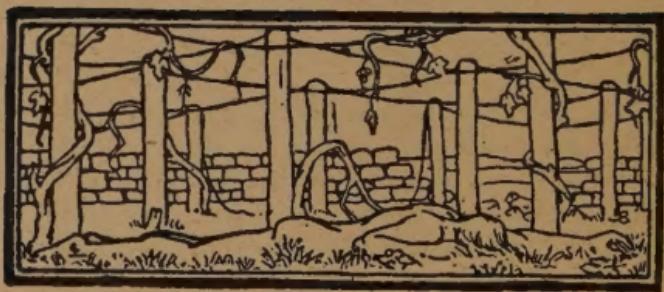
If this simple presentation of what that life meant and means, of what it stood for and stands for, strikes fire on the imagination of some who have not hitherto understood it in all its tragic pathos and beauty, my little book will have justified itself, and the world will be the better.

JOHN OXENHAM.

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Proem



*One planted him a vineyard,
And let it out for hire,
And when the time of grapes was come
The rent he did require.*

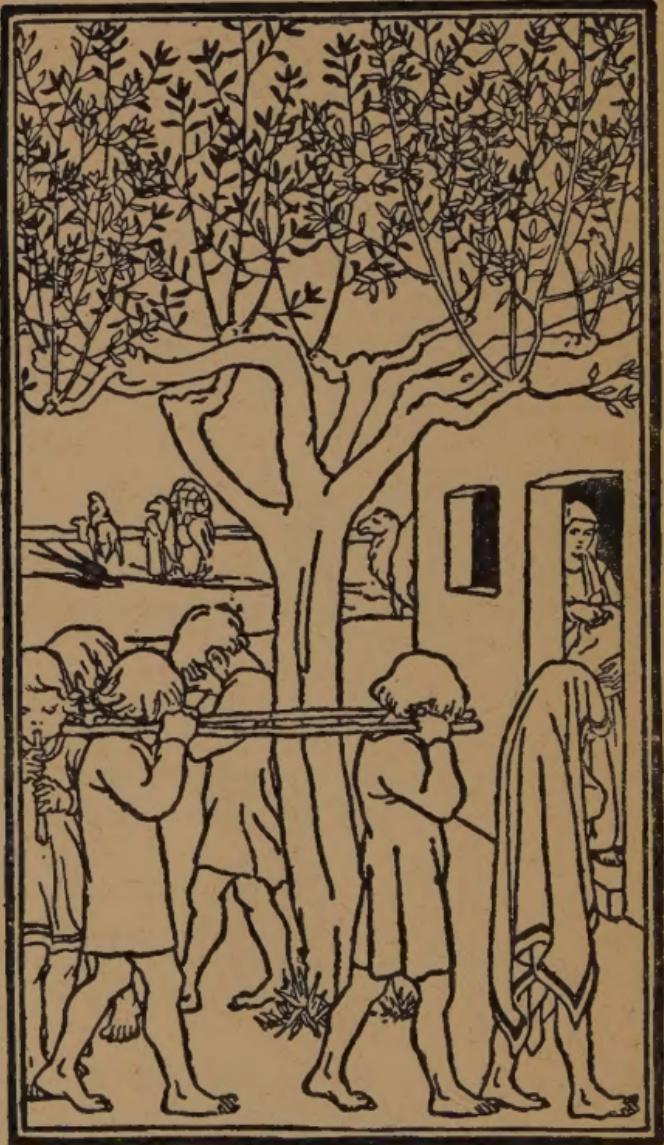
*But the hirers took his servant
And treated him with scorn.
They beat him sore, and cast him out,
And he went back forlorn.*

*The Master sent another,
And him they served the same;
Another, and another still,
But on each one they wrought their will,
And some did stone, and some did kill,—
Till their cup was filled with shame.*

*Then the Master sent his only son,
"They will honour him," said he.
But—"Here is the son," the others said,
"This is the heir! If he be dead,
Whose shall the vineyard be?"*

*So they slew him there, the Master's son,
And the Master wroth was he.
"They have slain my son, my only one!
Evil on evil have they done,
But now their baleful course is run,—
An end to their infamy!"*

*Then he cast them out of the vineyard
And gave it to other men,
And they shall have nor part nor lot
In the Master's heritage, I wot,
Till they seek his grace again.*



Gentlemen—The King!

His Boyhood

To all the neighbours and the common ken
He came of plain and simple working-folk,—

The first-born of the village carpenter;
A son of toil born to a son of toil,
And differing in no way from his kin.

He sported with the village boys and girls
Among the vines and olives of the hills,
Nor lacked in boyish mischiefs with the rest.

He loved the games in street and market-place,
And laughed and splashed and shouted in the stream.

And on the great highway, with eager eyes
And parted lips, he lay and watched pass by

The long slow strings of camels with their packs

Piled high with mysteries from far-off lands,—

Down to the sea, up from the sea again,—
The ponderous shuttles of an empire's loom

10 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

That shot through all the warp of Palestine
The purple pride of Rome;—
And bands of soldiery, with heavy tread,
And hard, rough faces, and the clank of
steel;—
And, now and then, the passing pomp of
kings.
These all he watched with clear observant
eyes,
And chattered with the rest, but ne'er
forgot.

Nature he loved as kinsman loves his kin,
And held all beasts and birds and flowers
and trees
In sweet esteem, as though indeed they
were
In some strange way a very part of him,
And he the champion of their liberties.

In this alone he differed from the rest,
That, though he joined with glee in all
that passed,
His mind was ever stainless as the snow,
And no foul thought could find a lodging
there.

His mother watched him with strange
misted eyes
That held within their depths grave
mysteries,—
Thoughts all untellable of what had been
And all that still might be. . . .

Not understanding, but believing still,
She treasured deeply all he said and did,
And pondered all. And, when she for-
ward looked,
She hoped great things for him, and
dreamed at times
Of thrones and crowns, and an all-conquer-
ing King
Who should cast off the shackles from the
land
And set it free.

Him he called father he most dearly loved,
And learned of him all he could teach—
and more,
—Obedience, reverence, perfect trust in
God,
All that his life taught all unconsciously.
So, to the boy, the name of "father"
stood
Pre-eminent for all things high and true
And altogether good.

Like Other Boys

*He was a boy like other boys,
And played and sported with the rest;
He had his troubles and his joys,
And strove for mastery with the best.*

*He was a very boy, and had
His little faults—like other boys;
But he was always gay and glad,
And eager in his small employs.*

*With all the rest he went to school,
But gave his lessons more concern,
And school to him was never dull,
He had so keen a wish to learn.*

*He loved all birds and beasts and flowers,
And in the hills spent happy days
Lying unseen in cunning bowers
Where he could watch their curious ways.*

*He was great-hearted, tender, true,
And brave as any boy could be,
And very gentle, for he knew
That Love is God's own Chivalry.*

*He was a boy—like you—and you,—
As full of jokes, as full of fun,
But always he was bravely true,
And did no wrong to anyone.*

*And one thing I am sure about,—
He never tumbled into sin,
But kept himself, within, without,
As God had made him, sweet and clean.*



His Youth

BUT all too soon the much-loved father
died,
And on his youth full early fell the care
Of her whose life was all bound up in
him—
His sweet, young, saintly mother—and
for her
No labour was too great, no toil too long.

His trade was humble, but he gave to it
Such pride of high endeavour that his
skill
Won fame beyond his borders, and men
came
From far to buy his plows that never
turned
Poor furrows; and still more his perfect
yokes;
So smoothly rounded these, so deftly
shaped,
That no sleek neck was ever galled by
them,—
So easy, so well-fitting, that they made
All burdens light; and dumb beasts
everywhere
Thanked him who wrought so thought-
fully for them,
And got through twice the work they did
before.—
But goads he could not bring his hand to
make.

16 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

All that he did was always of his best;
To get perfection he would meet the dawn
And toil till daylight faded in the west.
Then in the dark he still went smoothing on,
With cunning fingers touched to tenderness,
Till not one burr or wrinkle in the wood
Remained. For, as he worked, he ever thought
Of that dumb brother who, somewhere, somewhen,
Would wear his yoke and maybe think of him.

When from the inner room his mother called,
"My son, the supper waits." He would reply,—
"I come!"—and straight would come,
and with him bring
The heavy yoke he'd promised for next day
But had not yet wrought fully to his mind.
And, as he ate, he would go smoothing on
Till his deft fingers found in it content.

So his fame spread, because his smallest work
Was ever ripest product of his skill;—
And all men honoured him.

And, ever, as he worked, his mind ran
deep
On life and death, and all that lies between.
His eager heart was stored with goodly
things,
For all he saw, and heard, and read became
A very part of him, touched with his fire,
And radiant with the jewels of his thought.

His soul ranged wide and ever loftily,
But life's complexities and man's small
care
For his true welfare weighed on him at
times,
And clouded him with sorrow.

Yet he was
By nature joyous, since he lived so near
To Nature's heart and so could meet each
ill,
Like Nature's self, with brave and hopeful
cheer,
That drew the sting, dropped balm into
the wound,
And healed its bitterness.

But, as he grew,
There burned within him such a pure
white flame
Of love, and truth, and right 'twixt man
and man,
That to his comrades he was friend of
friends;
But to all evil—a devouring fire.

18 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

Full neighbourly he was; in counsel wise
Beyond his years, quick to appreciate
Life's humours as its ills, and gifted with
A rare direct simplicity of speech
All gemmed with stories perfect to the
point.

So that men loved to listen to his talk,
And lingered in his workshop while he
wrought.

His face was winning in its gladsomeness;
The children crowded round him as he
toiled,
Begging for stories; and when business
pressed,
He set them working, to their great de-
light,—
Clearing his shavings, sorting out his
nails,
Helping the carpenter, and claiming toll
Of longer stories when his work was done;
While in and out the small birds flew, and
chirped
Their love for him because he loved them
so.

His strong calm eyes looked through the
outer masks
Of men and things, and saw what dwelt
within,
And whither it was tending, up or down.
None upon whom that clear gaze dwelt
but knew

Its strange compelling power. It seemed
as though

Their very souls lay bare unto his sight,
And none forgot that wondrous look of his.
Evil shrank from it as from lightning
flame,

But to his loved ones it was like the joy
Of well-springs in a dry and thirsty land.

At eventide when his full work was done,
And thought and hope travailed within
his soul,

He would at times climb up the dark
hillside

And sit and think, in solemn commune
there

With that, within him and without, which
spoke

With ever-growing urgency of God,—
Of all God meant, to him and all mankind,
But more, far more, to him than to the
rest.

And, as he sat, the birds and little beasts
Would creep up close and sit and watch
him there,

With eyes like tiny stars, and bated
breaths,

For they in him found sweet companion-
ship,

And he found good and God in everything.

All Homely Things

*All homely things and birds and flowers
Were very dear to him,
And the little children everywhere
Drew very near to him.*

*He loved them for their gentle grace,
Unspoiled by worldly ways,
All fresh from God's good hand they came
Each to its own right place.*

*He spoke to them and they to him,
And they always understood,
For he loved them and they loved him,
And they shared a common good;—*

*One Father theirs, and one the grace
That kept them sweet and clean,
And one the deep abiding joy
Of freedom from all sin.*

*Ours now that never-failing Love
That counts us all its own,
And leads us by the hand till we
Shall know as we are known.*

The Day's Work

So, through long years he toiled unceasingly,

Enriching all with loving thought and deed.

And then there came to him a call, and he,
Forewarned by his much thought that it
must come,

Left mother, home, and all, and followed
it;—

Not understanding fully all it meant,
Or whither it might lead,—
But never doubting God's all-need of him.

Long he had felt a quickening within
That called him to a greater work without.
Now it came, clear and unequivocal,
And, without questioning, he answered it,
And gave himself in full to what God
willed.

His eyes were opened and he knew at last
That God had meant him from the first
to be

His bearer of good tidings to mankind—
His chosen one to bring the world to Him.

* * * * *

[For man had fallen upon evil ways,
And God's great heart was very sore for
him.

Yet, having made him freeman of his fate,



With power to choose his way, for good
or ill,
He could not now revoke that mighty
trust,
Annul the laws on which His world was
based,
And make man good against his own
desire;
He could but sorrow at his waywardness
And strive to win him to Himself again.

And, thereunto, He, in most wondrous love,
Came down Himself to earth, was born a
babe,
And grew to manhood among other men,
That all men everywhere should feel that
He
Had borne, like them, the stress of
earthly life,
And was thereby more closely kin to them.

So, by the pattern of a perfect life,
Through which should shine the message
of God's love,
Man might be won from his own evil ways
And live to Him and seek His love again.]

*Wonder of wonders of all thought and
time!*

*Wonder of Love, transcending human
ken!—*

*God, The Creator, of His grace sublime,
For man became a man like other men.*

24 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

*Wonder of wonders, that The Master
Mind,
Which all this wondrous universe
designed,
Should of His love for man come down
to earth
To give man's soul the offer of new
birth!*

*And most amazing wonder—that man
should
Spurn that great offer of the Father-
hood!*

Here is, indeed, a holy mystery—
God, the Creator of the universe,
Of His own will was born a son of man,
And toiled with His own hands for daily
bread—
A village carpenter!
Thought stands amazed at sacrifice so
great,
Which none save God Himself had dared
portend,
And none save He may fully apprehend.

Work

*All labour gained new dignity
Since He who all creation made
Toiled with His hands for daily bread
Right manfully.*

*No work is commonplace, if all
Be done as unto Him alone;
Life's simplest toil to Him is known
Who knoweth all.*

*Each smallest common thing He makes
Serves Him with its minutest part;
Man only with his wandering heart
His way forsakes.*

*His service is life's highest joy,
It yields fair fruit a hundred fold.
Be this our prayer—"Not fame, nor gold,
But—Thine employ!"*



Testing Times

His race was bowed beneath the Roman yoke,
And longed, with soul-sick longing, to be free;
Captive, the royal race, God's chosen ones,
—Chosen indeed for His high purposes,
But lapsed therefrom through their own wilfulness,—
Looked for a promised leader who should come
To give them back their ancient heritage;
And, so far, looked in vain.

But, though they recked not, weightier bonds were theirs
Of their own making, but these galled them not.
For everywhere men followed other gods,
Old customs, ancient shibboleths, that held
The letter of the law, but missed its soul;—
Making vast show of outward righteousness
But careless of the rottenness within.
Their captive bodies strove against their bonds,
Their captive souls bore theirs full easily.
His work was plain,—to win them back to God,

28 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

That they in turn might win the world for
Him
And found on earth a Kingdom of His
love,—
A Kingdom without bounds of time or
space,
Wherein all earthly kingdoms should find
place,
And all men everywhere have liberty.

And he accepted it with joyous hope
And mighty expectation. Surely men
Would hear such message with an equal
joy,
And gladly welcome him, the messenger.

When first he felt that call he scarce had
dared
Believe himself the chosen for such work;
Yet he could not mistake it. His whole
soul
And every fount and fibre of his being
Leaped to that voice of blessing and behest,
"My own! My Son, in whom I am well
pleased!
Mankind and I have urgent need of thee!"

And therewith power and virtue came on
him
Beyond all knowledge. His whole being
glowed
With fervent white-hot passion for man-
kind

Which nought but all mankind could
satisfy—

Which man redeemed and one again with
God

Alone could satisfy.—

He knew himself God's message to man-
kind—

He knew!—He knew!—

He knew that mortal man may never look
With mortal eyes upon God's Majesty
And live.

Such glory were too great for him to
bear.

And yet he knew how seeing helps belief,
And that in him God's grace and glory
shone

Fit veiled for mortal eyes to look upon.

In the exalting wonder of it all
He went apart into the hills to be
Alone with God and this new greater self,
And there he met temptations bright as
heaven,
That tried and wrung his soul remorse-
lessly.

There he fought battles with his lesser self,
There fasted long and wrestled much in
prayer,
Lest any lower usage he should make
Of these new powers than God Himself
had willed.

Weary and faint, he hungered sore for
bread.
For bread!—when with a word he could
transform
The stones about him into sustenance.
It could not be that God would have him
die
Of hunger—and the work not yet begun.
These wondrous powers were given him
for the work,
And if he died the work would not be
done.
Sore was he troubled,—for it seemed so
right;
And yet he felt that these transcendent
powers
Were lent him, not to ease his own life's
ways,
But solely for God's mighty purposes.
He saw the snare and fought it to the
death.

And then again this tempting vision
came;—
One mighty signal of his heavenly powers
And all the people would proclaim him
King;
And on the spreading wave of their
acclaim
He could sweep evil out of all the
earth
And found therein a Kingdom unto God.

Powers such as these, full used, would give
to him

All earthly domination; kingdoms, kings,
All peoples, and all creatures, life, and
death,

Would lie within his hand, and he could
bring

Them all to God, redeemed and purified.

But—not of Force comes Love.

For God is Love, and Love is God,
And Love is born of Love alone,
And Love alone is Life.

He saw the snare and fought it to the
death.

So, there he waged his battles all alone,
Hungering and thirsting, weary and sore
spent,

Yet never swerving from his visioned path,
And steadfast ever to the Light within.

There he fought principalities and powers,
All evil things of darkness and of death;
And, striving valiantly, he won;—and
came again

Among his fellows—but a greater Man.

Yes, He was Tried

*Yes, he was tried, as you and I
At times are sorely tried.
Tried?—He was tried as you and I
Have never yet been tried.*

*But he fought on, and fought the more
When beaten to his knees,
There he was stronger than before,
And there won victories.*

*The storm that tries the growing tree
Does yet its life prolong,
For all that fierce oppugnancy
Roots it more deep and strong.*

*So, trials sent to you and me
Shall but increase our strength,
And if we bear us manfully
We shall win through at length.*

On the Road

FOR road-mates and companions he chose
twelve,

—All, like himself, of homeliest degree,
All toilers with their hands for daily bread,
Who, at his word, left all and followed him.

He told them of The Kingdom and its laws,
And fired their souls with zeal for it and
him.

He taught a new sweet simple rule of Right
'Twixt man and God, and so 'twixt man
and man,—

That men should first love God and serve
Him well,
Then love and serve their neighbours as
themselves.

They loved him for his gentle manliness,
His forthright speech, his wondrous win-
ning ways,

His wisdom, and his perfect fearlessness,
And for that something more they found
in him

As in no other.

For through the mortal the immortal
shone—

A radiant light which burned so bright
within



That nought could hide it. Every word
and look,

And a sweet graciousness in all he did,
Proclaimed him something measurelessly
more

Than earth had ever seen in man before,
And with him virtue went and holy power.

But yet they did not fully apprehend,
And still looked to him as the promised one
Who should take off the burden of their
yoke

And free the land from Rome.

Through all the land he journeyed, telling
forth

The gracious message of God's love for
man,—

That God's great heart was very sore for
man,

Was hungering and thirsting after man,
As one whose dearly loved have gone
astray,

As one whose children have deserted him.

The people heard him gladly, flocking
round

To catch his words, still more to see his
deeds,

The men all hopeful, and the women
touched

By this new message and the messenger;
And everywhere the children drew to him

And found in him a sweet new comradeship.

Strange was his teaching, stranger still
his deeds;—

He healed the sick and gave the blind
their sight,

With his own hands cleansed lepers of
their sores,

And raised the dead,—all in the name of
God,

And for the love God's great heart held
for them.

And they looked on in wonder and amaze,
And heard him for the wonders that he
wrought.

And as they worked, and as they ate,
they said,—

"This of a truth is he—the promised one,
Who shall take off the burden of our yoke
And set us free from Rome. For never
man

In all the world spoke thus, nor did such
deeds."

He spoke in glowing words of homely
things

That were to them their very daily life,
And turned them to such fruitage that
not one

Could e'er forget; they met them every-
where,

In field and fold, at home, and on the road,
Telling again the message that he brought.
And those he cured were there before their eyes,
Living memorials of God's love for man.

But, in the priestly places, fear of him
And his subversive teaching grew apace.
Envy and hatred, malice, all the powers
Of evil-vested interests were set
To stay the message and the messenger.

They poisoned with their venom every mind
They could wean from him with their subtle guile;—
He was a traitor to their ancient faiths—
A false Messiah, leading men astray.
He cast out devils with the Devil's help,—
He was a rebel against God and Rome,
And Rome would crush him with her heavy foot
And all who followed him.

They strove to trap him with insidious talk,
But all their craft he turned so that they fell
Into the pits they digged for him;—and all
The common folk hung on his words the more,
And would acclaim him King.

38 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

But he went calmly on his chosen way,
Healing the broken, balm ing all life's
wounds

With rich outpouring of the grace of God,
Telling to all men everywhere the word
Of God's undying love for all mankind;—
Living and loving graciously, that men
Should see in him the mirror of God's love.

He rent the vails that hung 'twixt God
and man,
And strove to open hearts long closed to
Him,
That they might see Life whole, and share
with Him
The joyousness of God's companionship.

"Come, Share the Road
with Me!"

[Follow Me!]



*Come, share the road with Me, My own,
Through good and evil weather;
Two better speed than one alone,
So let us go together.*

*Come, share the road with Me, My own,
You know I'll never fail you,
And doubts and fears of the unknown
Shall never more assail you.*

*Come, share the road with Me, My own,
I'll share your joys and sorrows.
And hand in hand we'll seek the Throne
And God's great glad to-morrows.*

40 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

*Come, share the road with Me, My own,
And when the black clouds gather,—
I'll share thy load with thee, My son,
And we'll press on together.*

*And as we go we'll share also
With all who travel on it,
For all who share the road with Me
Must share with all upon it.*

*So make we all one company,
Love's golden cord our tether,
And, come what may, we'll climb the way
Together—aye together!*

Travelling Days

FOR two full years he travelled all the land
With ever-growing anguish at its need;
Two years full-packed with grace of
goodly deed,
Two toilsome years broad-sowing the
white seed,
Two years of hope and disappointment
sore,
Two anxious years as, ever more and more,
Fears deepened in him that man would
not heed.

For, though they crowded round, and
drank his words,
He read their hearts and knew that it
was more
For what he did than for the truth he
brought.
They saw, they heard, and yet they did
no more
To mend their lives than they had done
before.

But he strove on against their heedless-
ness,
Bearing with hopeful patience all the ache
And burden of their selfish apathy.
This was the work that God had called
him to,
And all that he could give was yet too
small.



He gave his best, his fullest, noblest
best

And left the rest with God.

Body and soul unstintingly he gave,—
Himself, his all, and without rest or stay;
Homeless, without a place to lay his head,
Hungry and thirsty, weary with the road,
But hungering and thirsting most for men,
That not one soul in all the world be lost.
One thought alone filled all his days and
nights,

One sole desire,—to win man back to God.

When he was over-weary, he would go
Apart from all, to some high secret place
Where he could be alone with God awhile,
And there find full recharging of the soul
And heartening for the work God willed
for him.

But, everywhere and ever, the high-
placed—

The rich, the priests, the rulers,—all who
feared

And hated change, even change to better
things

Lest it should work their seeming detri-
ment,—

Opposed him bitterly, with rancorous
hate,

With lies and slanders,—anything to stay
His progress, lest the folk be won.

44 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

For such, his words were winged with lightning-fire
Which scorched their pride and withered their pretence;
And, as they chewed the ashes, they were filled
With gall and bitterness that craved his death.
To them God's love was as a book, tight-locked,
And sealed securely by their stiff-necked pride.
They were content with this world's good,
and asked
But full security for that they had.

Wherever evil showed its fullest head
He journeyed to attack it at its source,
Danger could never stay him from his end,
Nor death deter when duty bade him go.

Some hearkened to his teaching, wondering much,
But marvelling more at his most wondrous works.
And some received his words, gave him their hearts,
And strove for nobler life.—
And some had fears where this new way might lead;
And some would none of him and drove him off
With scornful words,—

And, sorrowing, he went upon his way.
But most just heard him for the deeds
 he wrought,
Then, heedless, turned to their own ways
 again.

When he was asked—"Art thou the
 coming King—
The Promised One, who shall redeem the
 land
And break the yoke of Rome?"
 He bade them see
The way he trod, the wonders that he
 wrought,
His pathway strewn with deeds of help-
 fulness,
And everywhere God's love for man pro-
 claimed.

But ever, the high-placed ones strove to
 stay
His message, poisoning the hearts and
 minds
Of all within their sway, and recking not
Of that they did, nor their souls' infamy.

So—slowly, surely, in his breaking heart
Was born the tragic sorrow of it all.
God had come down to man to give him
 life,
And man, earth-blinded, would have
 none of Him.
He could not force man to the better way

And man would not be led.—

He saw the end,—
 Man had been offered Life,—Eternal Joy
 In this world and the next,—Eternal Joy!
 And he, intent alone on earthly good,
 Still spurned the message and the Mes-
 senger.

God, through the great sad eyes of this
 His Son,
 Surveyed the world and saw it as it
 was;
 Fair He had made it, and it was all
 fair,
 But man had filled it with iniquities.

He could have pulverised it with a blow,
 And made it all afresh. But—Love for-
 bade.
 One other chance He still could give to
 man—
 One crowning sacrifice could make—
 Himself!
 The death of this Himself in human flesh
 Might wean man from his sin, and win
 him back;—
 For men think much of those who die for
 them.

Unflinchingly the Messenger forecast
 The likelihoods to which his face was set,—
 His life, his loving deeds, himself, had
 failed;

His death might yet give God the victory,
For men think much of those who die
for them.

One final mighty effort he would make;
Perchance e'en now the people might be
won,—

For men think much of those who die for
them.

But the great heart was very sorrowful
At man's gross blindness and ingratitude.

Will you open to the Master?

*Will you open to the Master?
He has trod a weary road;
Will you give your best as to honoured guest?
He has helped you with your load.*

*Will you open to the Master?
Will you give Him welcome sweet?
Will you give Him food of gratitude?
Will you bathe His tired feet?*

*Will you open to the Master?
Dare you keep your door tight locked?
Ah, think of your rue if it comes that you
Never answered when He knocked.*

*Will you open to the Master?
He comes in many a guise.
Will you welcome all who on you call,
Lest your Master you despise?*

*Will you open to the Master?
Thrice blest who none denies,
But who for love of Him above,
Shares His sweet charities.*

To Face the Foe

THE Mother-City, where the great ones
dwelt,

Was ever strongest to resent his way,
And there each year all gathered for the
feast.

There he would go, and there, with every
power

That God had given him he would plead
with them

To mend their lives and give their hearts
to God.

It might mean death,—but death might
bring new life,—

For men think much of those who die for
them.

So, thitherward he boldly set his face,
Prepared to meet whatever might befall,
And thither, with reluctant feet, his
friends

Accompanied him, close companied them-
selves

By doubts and fears. For they had
counted on

A triumph worthy of his mighty works,
And for their zeal a fitting recompense.

But now—he spoke of tribulations sore,
And even of death as his reward and theirs.

So different this from all their early hopes,
Eye questioned eye with puzzled wonder-
ment



And found no consolation,—only dread
Of what the future held for him and them.

But he pressed boldly on, with steadfast
face,
To that last struggle with the evil powers.
"Perchance if One should die for them!—
Perchance!"—

Rang in his heart and filled him with new
fire,—
"Perchance if One should die for them!—
Perchance!"

And that brave figure pressing on in front
Gave fleeting courage to his followers;—
But they were doubtful, and their feet
were slow.

Was ever such a contest?—One brave
soul

Aglow with loving zeal against a world
Sunk deep in sin and all content there-
with!

One soul against the world! But such a
soul!—

The world's creator pleading with the
world

That he had made—and pleading all in
vain.

He, the All-Powerful, yet powerless
To save his wandering world against its
will.

Love only could retrieve it and redeem,
And Love it held in lightest of esteem.

52 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

See now this marvel of unchanging grace,
This crowning proof of Love Omnipotent!—

One touch upon the intricate machine
And Earth had vanished like a wind-blown
spark;

One rending crash—and chaos—and an
end,—

A flaming streak athwart a midnight
sky,

And dwellers on the other spheres might
say,—

"Another star has vanished into space;
Was it, perchance, inhabited like ours?"

But, with desire, he had desired man's
good,

And, short of ending him, he could but
strive

To win his heart and wean him from his
sin.

And, for the love he bore him, he bore too
The burden of his sin and wilfulness.

His Way



*The older law forbade them this and that,
With penalties for each delinquency;
They were but children, rough and obstinate,
And needed guidance in their infancy.*

*His loving wisdom taught them otherwise
And otherwisely,—breaking those old ties
Of bondage, with the love that sanctifies
And gives to Life its nobler liberties.*

* * * * *

*He taught them his new simple law
Of Right 'twixt God and man,
And showed them how from that would grow
Right too 'twixt man and man.*

*—That every man should strive his best
To serve his neighbour's need;—
“God first, then man—serve all you can!”
That was his simple creed.*

54 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

*—That none should ever have to ask
His neighbour's aid in vain,
But that his need itself should plead
And instant help obtain.*

*He taught that every man should do
As he would be done by,
For as man gives so he receives,
With utmost equity.*

*Give love and love will fill your life;
Give hate and hate is yours;
For as you give, so you receive,
And shall while life endures.*

Storming the Heights

So he pressed on, with gracious deeds,
and words

More gracious still, if they but under-
stood;

But he went sadly when he saw that still,
In spite of all that he could do for them,
Their hearts were set on earthly things
alone,—

On this world's kingdoms and on con-
querors' crowns,

And freedom from the galling yoke of
Rome.

His Kingdom of the Spirit had no place
In them, nor even a desire.

His fame had gone before him. Every-
where

There flocked to meet him such great
multitudes

That hope flamed up in him once more.

Perchance he yet might win them to God's
way.

He would declare himself The Promised
One,

And boldly claim their hearts and lives
for Him.

If that availed not, death would be his
lot,—

But he would gladly die to win them back.

An old-time prophet had foretold a King



Who should come meekly,—not as others
came,

With pomp and pride of royal circum-
stance,

But riding simply on an ass's foal

And bringing peace to them and all man-
kind.

So would he ride. Perchance their eyes
might bear

The purport of the symbol to their hearts.
He found a foal that never man had used,
And, mounting it, he pressed upon his
way.

The people caught his meaning, and with
joy,

With shout and song, his path with
branches strewed,

And flung their garments down that he
should pass

In triumph like a conqueror.

"He comes!"

They cried—"He comes!—The Promised
One of God!"

And poured tumultuous through the city
gates.

Through the dense throngs and sounding
streets he rode

Straight to the Temple Porch, and entered
there

As of his right. And, looking round, he
saw

The courts all cumbered up with merchandise
And traffic rude prevailing everywhere.

In righteous wrath he drove the hucksters out,
"My house," he cried, "shall be a house of prayer
For all the nations,—not a den of thieves!
Out with you! Out!"—and drove them headlong forth,
As though indeed the place belonged to him,
And not to those who shared their shameless gains.

To them they sped complaining, and they came,
Demanding by what right he did these things.
But, with a word, he silenced them, and they,
Convinced that life could not hold him and them,
Took counsel how they might procure his death.

Again, again, and yet again, he told
In winning words to those vast multitudes
The heights and depths and wonders of God's love.
And they—they listened, but their ears were stopped,

They saw, but only with earth-blinded eyes.
His words were sweet, his deeds most
wonderful;
Such power as that could any height
attain,
And they acclaimed him as their promised
King.

But he went sadly, for he saw their hearts,
How they were set on earthly things alone,
And he had failed to win them back to
God.—

And yet—"Perchance if One should die
for them!"
His death might win them where his life
had failed.

His followers still hoped between their
fears,
But they were mazed and shaken to the
depths

By his refusal of the people's will.
With might so great why should he
hesitate?

With powers so wondrous he could conquer
still

And give the eager folk their heart's
desire.

Instead, he spoke of partings and of death,
And they were torn and twisted with
distress,—

They understood not,—but they followed
him.

He—They—We

*They hailed Him King as He passed by,
They strewed their garments in the road,
But they were set on earthly things,
And He on God.*

*They sang His praise for that He did,
But gave His message little thought;
They could not see that their souls' good
Was all He sought.*

*They could not understand why He,
With powers so vast at His command,
Should hesitate to claim their rights
And free the land.*

*Their own concerns and this world's hopes
Shut out the wonder of His news;
And we, with larger knowledge, still
His Way refuse.*

*He walks among us still, unseen,
And still points out the only way,
But we still follow other gods
And Him betray.*

Lest we forget

THEY sat with him at table that last night,
And, as the shadow nearer, nearer drew,
He spoke with them more deeply than
before,
And strove to hearten them for what
should come,
And all that should come after.—

Plain though the table and the viands spare
That was the greatest feast the world has
known.

Breaking the bread, he blessed it and the
wine,
And bade them eat and drink in love of
him,
Saying, "Do this in memory of me!"
—A feast of dedication unto God,
The consecration of a sacrament
That should endure to all eternity.

And ever since, according to his word,
Through all the ages and in many lands,
That plain memorial table has been spread
For all to whom his word is Love's true
law,—

To bind his own in bonds of lasting love,
To make them free of God's great heritage,
Brothers in him who was the Father's love,
And heirs with him of Heaven's high
liberties.



But he was very sorrowful. The time
drew nigh
Which, though he had foreseen, was
charged with woe.
And he alone knew all the weight he bore
Through man's rejection of God's proffered
love.

One of his own, there with him at the
board,
Pledged with the rest, had yet betrayed
his trust
And sold him to his foes.
Why?—Who shall say, since no man
truly knows?
That was the first link in the breaking chain
Which soon, he knew, would ravel all
apart;
That was the first foul blow upon his heart
Already bursting with its weight of pain.

All would desert him; that, too, he foresaw,
And leave him friendless in his hour of
need,
To face the world's contumely alone,—
By man rejected,—outcast,—and de-
spised,—
A thing of scorn,—stripped bare of every-
thing.
And, though he knew it was Love's only
way,
All that was mortal in him shrank before
That last dread ordeal passing mortal woe.

64 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

Yet, though his soul was heavy, and his
heart
Was bruised and sore beyond all human
ken,
He told them quietly of what must be
Before their strife should end in victory;—
How he must go to open wide the door
'Twixt God and man, that it should close
no more,—
How they must follow in his steps, and
still
Bear witness for him and his hope fulfil.

*"Perchance if One should die for them!—
Perchance!
For greater love can no man show than
this—
That for another he lay down his life.—
Perchance if One should die for them!—
Perchance!"*

And then, in happier mood, he told them
how
He surely would come back to them again,
To hearten them for that they had to do,—
To prove that Death was vanquished, and
the sting
Drawn from the grave by Love's all-
conquering power,—
That God's great love still craved man's
highest good,
And would, though man should still
rebellious prove.

The Spread Table

*Where'er I be, Lord, spread for me
Thy table with its holy fare,
Then, though my lot be slenderness,
And my tent but the wilderness,
Full amply plenished I shall be,
Since Thou art there.*

*And wilt Thou break the bread for me?
For me pour out the sacred wine?
And as we eat and drink wilt Thou
Renew in me the holy vow,
And fill me with new love for Thee,
Since I am Thine?*

*Not the spread table, nor the wine,
Nor the sweet breaking of the bread,
That makes the feast,—but that we meet
Together here in commune sweet
With Thee, and by Thy Grace Divine,
We all are fed.*

*And when we leave Thy table, Lord,
And go into the world again,
Help us to carry with us there
The savour of that holy fare,
And prove the virtue of The Word
To other men.*



Broken—not Beaten

THEN, in the garden, whither he had gone
To seek God's help in that which should
befall,

His loneliness fell on him like a wound,
And smote him down and left him desolate,
Alone against the world,—alone with God.

And there—with swords and spears and
rabble crew,

The rulers took him—

Took him with violence, as men would take
A malefactor to his rightful doom.

Theirs now the winning blow!

Theirs the triumphant stroke of victory!

And theirs—

The crime of all the ages and all time.

With virulence they flung God's offered
love

Back in His face and dragged His son to
death.

The traitor led them to him with a kiss
Of base betrayal. And the great sad eyes
Of wounded love looked down into his soul
With such a vast reproachful tenderness
That he awoke to knowledge of his deed,
And straightway went and hanged him-
self. . . .

But him who was God's word of love to
man

They roughly bound and dragged before
the court,
Whose will had long since judged him
worthy death.
Now with mock justice they condemned
again,
And haled him to the Roman governor
To sentence, since no power of death was
theirs.

There, chance once more occurred by
which they might
Redeem their souls from this most dread-
ful crime.

By custom, every year, the Governor
Was used to free one prisoner at the feast,
And, sore perplexed by this strange
silent man,
In whom he found no wrong against the
state,
He offered to release him as their due.

But they—
Perverted by their leaders, and enraged
At his refusal of their clamant will
To raise revolt and try for liberty,—
Cried for Barabbas, the seditious,
But for the other they cried "Crucify!"

Freedom they claimed for a rebellious
knaves,
And for the messenger of God, whose life
Had been the revelation of God's love—

The Death!—

Howling against him like a pack of wolves
Athirst for blood, nor less would satisfy.

O grim black stain upon the book of life!—
The good was offered, and their own free
will

Instead chose evil, as so oft since then
The world has chosen—and so chooses
still!

Barabbas?—or the Love of God?

And they Barabbas chose

And endless infamy.

Barabbas?—or the Love of God?

Shall we join hands with them

In their apostasy?

So, at their call, Barabbas was released,
And in his place God's messenger of love
Was handed to the soldiers to torment.

Nought was he spared of bitterness and
shame;

His chosen few had fled in panic fear,
But one returned to see what came to him,
And, taxed with his acquaintance, thrice
denied

All knowledge of him.—And his master
heard,

And turned and looked on him; and he
did bear

The grief of it within him till he died,

Long afterwards, the martyr-death, forgiven,
And following boldly in his master's steps.

But him who brought God's message unto man,
Who was the very Love of God to man,
The soldiers stripped, and decked in royal robes,
Gave him a sceptre, crowned him with a thorn,
Acclaimed him King, and bade him prophesy,
Mocked him and spat on him, in every way
Most evilly entreated him.

Bore all with all-enduring dignity
And spoke no word. And he

One word—and angel hosts had succoured him,—
One word—and earth had vanished like a scroll,—
But with that word his work had gone for nought,
For love had then not been fulfilled in him.

In silence that spoke louder than all words,
In silence that has thundered down the years,
In silence that has never ceased to speak

To all men's souls through all the ages
since,
He suffered all with patient dignity,
Knowing the end, and trustful for the
rest.

With jeers and taunts they nailed him to
a cross.

And then, with tearing flesh and riving
bone,
Raised him on high that all might see
their King,

And sat and watched him there.

And he, in patient silence, suffered all,
For that they did was still the least of
all

His suffering.

His great heart broke
At thought of man's rejection of God's
love;

And at the last the gallant spirit sped
With one embracing prayer for all man-
kind,—

"Father—forgive!—they know not what
they do."

* * * * *

So died this son of man and Son of God.
And a great darkness fell upon the earth—
God's love eclipsed by man's perverted
will.

72 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

The shadow of that day still clouds the
world,
And shall, until, of his own heart's desire,
Man turns to God and seeks to do His will.

These by their hate postponed God's will
for man,
And age-long darkness cast upon the
earth,
Which God's intent all fair and glorious
made.

But God still waits for man to turn to
Him—
Still loves and longs . . . still works . . .
and hopes . . . and waits.

The Cross at the Cross-ways

See therel—God's signpost, standing at the ways

*Which every man of his free-will must go,—
Up the steep hill,—or down the winding ways,—*

One or the other every man must go.

*He forces no man, each must choose his way,
And as he chooses so the end will be;
One went in front to point the Perfect Way,
Who follows fears not where the end will be.*

* * * * *

*To every man there openeth
A Way, and Ways, and a Way,
And the High Soul climbs the High Way,
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.*

*But to every man there openeth
A High Way and a Low,
And every man decideth
The Way his soul shall go.*



The Crowning Wonder

HIS followers had fled like frightened sheep,
Their hopes all wrecked by the catastrophe;
And yet, within a little span of days,
They were all bound together and to him
In fellowship far closer than before;
And, bold beyond their natures, and
afame
With new-born zeal that burned like pure
white fire,
They faced the world prepared to live and
die
To bring to man the Kingdom of God's
Love.
They were new men, remade, and wholly
filled
With that great spirit that had been their
Chief's.

They had sore doubted; they had feared
and fled;
Their hearts had turned to water when
he died;
They had lost hope; and faith, too hardly
tried,
Had sped and left them bruised and
stupefied;—
But now . . . they knew!—they knew!—
They had been weak,—but now they were
like gods,

76 "GENTLEMEN—THE KING!"

Performing wonders in the name of God,
And preaching everywhere their risen
Lord
In words that pierced like lightning to
men's hearts.
And all with such vast plenitude of power
That all men marvelled.

And why?
How had this wonder come?—
Hear now the crowning glory of it all!—

He had made promise on that fatal night
To come again and be with them awhile,
To cheer and hearten them for his great
work.

They saw him die the malefactor's death,
They saw his body sealed within the tomb,
They saw the guard that watched it night
and day.

But His true self was not to bind nor hold,
And three days later, as He had foretold,
He came again among them as of old,—
Came in His own marred body, bearing
still
The ragged nail-wounds in His hands and
feet,—
Came in the flesh, and ate and drank
with them;
And not of them alone was He thus seen,
But unto many who had known Him well.

Unto His own, He spoke full lovingly,
And pledged them all anew to do His
will,
Till all men everywhere should know
God's love for man,
And His eternal longing for man's good.

* * * * *

No man may see the face of God and
live;
His Love enfolds us like the air and light;
His wonders are about us everywhere;
But finite cannot grasp the infinite
And so He veiled His Godhead in the
flesh,
That all might see and know Him in His
Son,—
Might see in Him the fulness of His love
And share with Him the victory He won.

So died the mortal of this son of man,
Whose body shrined the immortal love of
God.
He lived that His fair life might be to man
A perfect mirror of the Love of God,
The full expression of His Fatherhood.

He died that Love might live for evermore,
And find in Him its ever-open door,
And we in Him find God still more and
more.

He rose to show that Death is not the end
But the beginning of a life that will
transcend

Man's highest hopes, and will in full
amend,

By God's sweet grace, life's woe.

An end? An end? Nay, then, there is
no end!

Death vanquished is no more man's foe
But his good friend.

He rose to show that Death is but The
Gate

To Life Immortal, where He still doth
wait

To welcome man with love impassionate.

And now He lives and loves and pleads
as then,

And in His own good time will come
again,

To dwell once more among the sons of
men.

Risen



*While dawn still lingered in the shade
The women sought the guarded tomb,
Where in their sorrow they had laid
With streaming tears their much-loved dead.*

*Now with sweet spices they were come
To consecrate Love's martyrdom,
But all life's hope and joy had fled,—
Their Lord was dead!—Their Lord was
dead!—*

*But with amaze they found instead—
The rolled-back stone,
Their loved one gone,
And one in gleaming white, who said,—
Put past your fear!
He is not here,
But for your cheer is risen.
Love broke the bars of Death's dark
prison,
The Lord of Love and Life is risen,
The Lord indeed is risen!*

RISEN

*The Lord is risen!
Now earth again
Lift up to heaven the joyful strain,
Life-out-of-Death's eternal gain—
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
To wake the souls of men.*

*The Lord indeed is risen
From out His earthly prison,
And now, all kings above,
He reigns for evermore—
The Lord of Life, the King of Love,
Life's loving Conqueror.*

*The Lord is risen!
The heavenly choir
With all creation doth conspire
To swell the strain still higher, higher,—
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
Mankind with love to inspire.*

*The Lord indeed is risen
From out His earthly prison,
And now, all kings above,
He reigns for evermore—
The Lord of Life, the King of Love,
Life's loving Conqueror.*

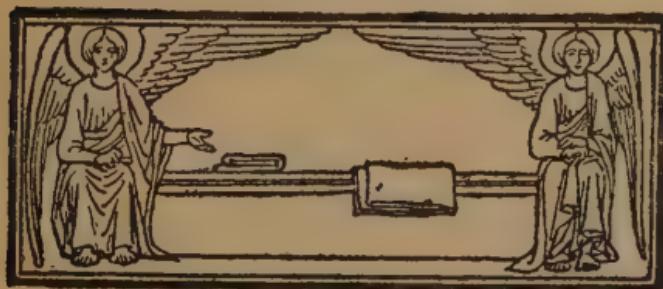
*The Lord is risen!
O Wondrous Word,
Which heaven and earth enraptured heard
And to their heights and depths were stirred,*

*The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
Our loving, living, Lord.*

*The Lord indeed is risen
From out His earthly prison,
And now, all kings above,
He reigns for evermore—
The Lord of Life, the King of Love,
Life's loving Conqueror.*

*The Lord is risen!
Immortal Love,
That for mankind so greatly strove
On earth below, in heaven above,—
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen
To show that God is Love.*

*The Lord indeed is risen
From out His earthly prison,
And now, all kings above,
He reigns for evermore—
The Lord of Life, the King of Love,
Life's loving Conqueror.*





Epilogue

*"I and My Father are one . . .
How often would I have
gathered you . . .
And ye would not."*

To those of His own time and race,—
His life seemed one long disappointed
hope,
Cut short before its prime by shameful
death,—
To some, relief; to some, catastrophe;
To those—a baneful star which blazed
and fell;
To these—a flower which never came to
fruit
But spilled its fragrance on a stony waste.

But to His own, when He had come again,
There came the speedy knowledge that in
Him
There burned a flame of pure white living
fire—
Of love and hope and perfect trust in
God—
Which outward circumstance could never
dim;
And that white fire, they knew, would
never die,
But slowly, surely, would dispel the dark
And in its time would lighten all the world.

But God
In eager love had longed and looked for
more,
And He was sad at man's indifference.
For He had hoped that love so passing
great
Would there, and then, and without doubt
prevail,
And win man back to fullest loyalty;
And, but for man's self-willed perversity,
It *had* prevailed, and all the world been
won
To His true service and its own high good.

Two thousand years of suffering untold
Have not sufficed to expiate that loss
In man's refusal of God's offered love;
And, since Christ died that day on Calvary,
The world has crucified itself and Him
On many a cross of agony and shame.

But He still waits,—and works unceas-
ingly,
With love unchanging and unchangeable,
With longing hope, and patience infinite,
Till man shall turn from his own wilful
ways
And find in Him his soul's supreme
delight.

God's fuller vision sees where all doth
tend,
And what to man seemed failure He
divined

As but the sowing of the fair white seed
Whose fruit on all the nations should
descend.

He had hoped more. He sorrowed at
man's loss,

Yet saw it a Beginning.—And the End
With patience infinite He still doth wait.

The seed then planted never yet has
ceased

To bear good fruit for lessening of life's
woes,

But the full harvest has not yet been
reaped,

And He still works—and He still hopes—
and waits.

And what is He to us?

What does He stand for in these later
times?—

As we look back along the troubled years
Through all their bitter reek and pregnant
gloom,

Even our short sight can clearly apprehend
The difference His coming made to man.
Without the radiance of that wondrous
life,

In growing volume lightening all the ways,
Earth had been sunk in untold miseries,
Beyond the power of human heart to bear.
Without the crowning wonder of His
death

And glorious resurrection, man had been

Still bondman to the grave, and without
hope
Of anything beyond.

He conquered Death;
He broke the bars; He set the portals
wide,
And led the way—the first-fruits of God's
love,—
That man might follow, without fear, the
road
Which He Himself triumphantly had trod.

All that for man!
All that!—And still He treads,
With eager face, that road of longing love
And disappointed hope, and suffers still
The ceaseless floutings of man's wayward
will.

And He must suffer, He must sorrow, till
The passion of His love and hope prevail,
And man, of his whole craving soul's
desire,

Turn from himself to find himself again
In that great love which gave its all for
him.

And all who share His road must share
with Him

The burden of His sorrow and His hope,
And count the world as nought if so they
save

One soul for Him who gave Himself for
all.

The Two Views

*To man, it seemed that Evil had prevailed,
That His fair life had altogether failed,
And nought was left but what the Cross
impaled;—*

But God saw otherwise!

*They would have hailed Him King, and
with acclaim,
Upon the wings of His far-reaching fame,
Have swept the land like a devouring flame;
But God saw otherwise!*

*It seemed as though His life had gone for
nought,—*

*Nothing to show for that long battle fought,
But a pale prisoner to the gibbet brought;
But God saw otherwise!*

*No lasting good seemed ever like to come
Of all His sowing,—neither fruit nor bloom,
Instead—a felon's cross, an alien tomb;—*

But God saw otherwise!

*We too, at times, come nigh to lose our hope,
When with life's evils we no more can cope,
And in the dark with heavy hearts we grope;*

But God sees otherwise!

Thy Kingdom Come!

*Thy Kingdom come!
And quickly, Lord!
For Life is a tempestuous sea,
Where storm-winds beat unceasingly
And drive us oft away from Thee.
So, day by day,
We ever pray—
"Thy Kingdom come!
Thy Kingdom come!"*

*Thy Kingdom come!
Lord, till it comes,
We are but voyagers who roam
With straining eyes amid the gloom,
And seek but cannot find our home.
So, day by day,
In faith we pray—
"Thy Kingdom come!
Thy Kingdom come!"*

*Thy Kingdom come!
For when it comes
Earth's crying wrongs will be redressed,
And man will make his chiefest quest
The Peace of God which giveth rest.
So, day by day,
In hope we pray—
"Thy Kingdom come!
Thy Kingdom come!"*

*Thy Kingdom come!
Ah, grant us, Lord,
To see the day when Thou shalt reign
Supreme within the hearts of men,
And Love shall dwell on earth again!*

*For that, Thy Day,
We ever pray—
"Thy Kingdom come!
Thy Kingdom come!"*

Thy Will be Done!

*Thy Will be done!
Lord, when it is,
Earth will forsake her miseries
And turn again to Thee, where is
Sure hope of full recoveries.*

*So, day by day,
In faith we pray,—
"Thy Will be done!
Thy Will be done!"*

*Thy Will be done!
Until it is,
Life cannot know the untold bliss
Of full and free and sure release
From all that now doth mar its peace.*

*So, day by day,
In hope we pray—
"Thy Will be done!
Thy Will be done!"*

*Thy Will be done!
For Thy Will is
Man's deepest, highest, fullest joy,
Love's purest gold without alloy!
With thought of that our hearts we buoy,*

*And, day by day,
Full-faithed, we pray—
"Thy Will be done!
Thy Will be done!"*

Thy Will be done!
Thy good will is
For every man such happiness,
Such freedom from life's care and stress,
As never man did yet possess;—
 And so each day
 With joy we pray—
 "Thy Will be done!
 Thy Will be done!"

Then—and Now

THEN!—Crowned with the thorn,
He died
The death of scorn—
The Crucified!

NOW!—THINE IS THE KINGDOM.
And THE POWER, and THE
GLORY,
FOR EVER and FOR EVER.
AMEN.



Kinsman!—Canst Thou Forget?

I LOVE to think upon Thy human need,
 Thy baby fingers groping for the breast,
 Thy white limbs on Thy mother's knee
 astrid,
 Thy soft head croodling down into its
 nest.

I love to think upon those hidden years,
 When just a boy Thou wast, with other
 boys,—
 Sharing their hopes, their ventures, and
 their fears,
 And jubilant with them in all their joys.

I love to think on Thy humanity,
 Seeking God's Way, with ever-opening
 eyes,
 Through the thronged courts of earthly
 vanity,
 To that last crowning grace of Sacrifice.

I love to think upon Thy dust-stained
 feet,
 That ached and hardened with the stony
 road,
 And craved relief from parch of noonday
 heat
 In each cool stream that by the wayside
 flowed.

I love to think upon Thy needfulness,
That made the sinner's kiss upon Thy feet
Balm for old Simon's lack of heedfulness,
And to Thy want a joy most exquisite.

I love to think upon Thy human-ness
That welcomed sundown and the close of
day,
Which left Thee free, for just a little space,
To climb the hill, and sit, and think, and
pray.

I love Thy craving for sweet loneliness,
When the strain grew past human strength
to bear,
I love Thy gracious calm amid the stress,
Yea—and the anguish of Thy last despair.

Though Thou wast God, yet truly wast
Thou man,—
Man like myself, since Thou life's round
hast trod;
So, by Thy human sufferings, I can
Claim Thee as Brother yet acclaim Thee
God.

Forget, Thou canst not.—God Thou art
and man.
Thou too hast borne the yoke and kissed
the rod.
By that, O Kinsman, to the full I can
Feel Thee my Brother, Father, Mother,—
God.

The Never-failing Friend

OUR God is an eternal Christ,
 Unchangeable, unchanged;
 His love is still as warm and true
 As when life's common ways He ranged
 Beneath the Syrian blue.

Our God is an eternal Christ,
 And Christ is God's own Love;
 He suffered death upon the Tree,
 Love's immortality to prove
 To every man and me.

Our God is an eternal Christ,
 All tender, wise, and true;
 As once He was to those of old,
 So is He now to me and you
 Till all the tale is told.

As Christ was then, so God is now,
 The never-failing friend;
 Put all your trust in Him, and He
 Will bear you safe till Time shall end
 In Love's eternity.

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